



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2013

No. 113

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

August 1, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BILL HUIZENGA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

SENATOR PAUL SIMON WATER FOR THE WORLD ACT OF 2013 (H.R. 2901)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago, if someone asked what a bow tie-wearing progressive Democrat from Oregon and my colleague TED POE, a cowboy, boot-wearing conservative Republican from Texas, could agree on, you would have said, Not much.

Today, we are partners on an issue, however, that makes sense regardless

of your politics: ensuring sustainable, equitable access to clean water for nearly 800 million women, children, and men who don't have it and the 2.5 billion without even the most basic sanitation services. TED POE and I think that politics should stop with water. That's why, today, we are introducing the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2013 (H.R. 2901).

Since Congress passed the Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act in 2005, the United States has become a global leader in efforts to increase access to clean water and sanitation, developing and implementing some of the most innovative approaches to help those in greatest need. We must not only maintain this progress but work to further refine and focus the efforts at USAID and at the Department of State by enacting the World Act.

We are committed because dirty water and a lack of sanitation affects all areas of development assistance. This is especially the case when it comes to women and children. More children are killed by waterborne disease than any other. Increasing access to clean water and sanitation has a significant multiplier effect on other areas of development, enabling us to do more with less—critical in a time of constrained budget resources.

Every day, the world has more people but fewer freshwater resources. Our bipartisan legislation will give the United States the capacity to avoid unnecessary loss of life and conflict in the future. It would ensure that water, sanitation, and hygiene programs are reflected in other development assistance; prioritize long-lasting impacts of United States foreign aid dollars; and increase the focusing on monitoring, evaluation, transparency, and capacity building.

Children cannot attend school if they're sick from dirty water. Half the world's hospital beds today are filled with people suffering from waterborne

disease needlessly. Hours spent getting water are hours not working or in school.

A lack of clean drinking water has a disproportionate effect on women, who, in developing countries, walk an average of 3.7 miles a day to get water. The estimates are that 40 billion working hours are lost each year in Africa alone—200 million hours today.

Having water means girls can go to school and build a better future. It also reduces the risk of violence and sexual assault. A study by Doctors without Borders found that 82 percent of the women and girls treated for rape in West and South Darfur were attacked while they were gathering water or firewood.

The challenge is not getting easier, because 97 percent of the water on Earth is salty and unfit to drink. Of the 2½ percent, roughly, of the Earth's water that is fresh, two-thirds of that is frozen—locked away in the ice caps and glaciers. Although it's rapidly melting because of climate change, that's not going to help us, because it will be largely salty as well. We've got less than 1 percent of global freshwater available for human use; and because of the demands for growing food, energy and industry, only about one-tenth of a percent is available for people to drink. This tiny fraction is further diminished by deficient or nonexistent water infrastructure. Even in the United States, we waste 6 billion gallons of freshwater every day through leaky pipes. We are entering an era of severe water scarcity that the Department of Defense warns could lead to global insecurity.

In short, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more fundamental to families and global health than clean water and sanitation. More needs to be done, and it needs to be done well. Taxpayers, understandably, demand better results and greater transparency from foreign aid. This bill provides the tools and incentives to do just that.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H5265